

### GROUP OF 7 (G7)



**G7 leaders start their annual summit on June 13 looking to double down on support for Ukraine in its war with Russia and offer a united face in confronting China's political and economic ambitions.**

- The G7 (Group of Seven) is an intergovernmental political and economic forum.
- **Members:** Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, United Kingdom, and United States; **European Union** as a non-enumerated member
- The G7 was established in 1975. **Russia** was included in the late 1990s, creating the G8, but was **suspended** in 2014 after the annexation of Crimea.
- **Function:** The G7 meets annually to discuss and coordinate economic policies. The leaders address many global issues, including monetary policy, security, energy, and climate change.
- **Significance:** While the G7 cannot enact laws, its past decisions have had significant global consequences
- **Summits:** The annual G7 summit is hosted by one of the member countries, which rotates each year. The summits provide a platform for the leaders to discuss pressing global issues and coordinate policy responses.
  - The **2024-** G7 summit will take place from June 13-15 in **Apulia, Italy**. Italy holds the G7 presidency in 2024.

### GENDER GAP REPORT 2024

**Of the 30 Union ministers in the newly formed Indian cabinet, only two are women.**

Economy	Rank		Score
	Regional	Global	
Bangladesh	1	99	0.699
Nepal	2	117	0.664
Sri Lanka	3	122	0.653
Bhutan	4	194	0.551
India	5	129	0.641
Maldives	6	132	0.633
Pakistan	7	145	0.570

**Overall, the number of ministers in the central council has reduced from 10 in the previous government to seven.**

- The Global Gender Gap Report 2024, released by the **World Economic Forum (WEF)**, highlights the **persistent gender inequality** across various sectors globally.

## Findings

- **Top-Ranking Countries:** Iceland has maintained its position as the most gender-equal country for the 14th consecutive year, with a gender gap score of 91.2%.
  - Other Nordic countries, such as Norway, Finland, and Sweden, also rank high in the top five.
- **India** ranked **129** in this year's index, scoring marginally **lower than the previous edition**.
- This slight regression is mainly the result of small declines in 'Educational Attainment' and 'Political Empowerment', while 'Economic Participation and Opportunity' slightly improved.
- India ranked the **third-lowest among the South Asian economies**, faring worse than Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bhutan.

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## WHAT ARE MICROALGAE?

CSIR-Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (IICT) scientists have spotlighted the potential of Chlorella Growth Factor (CGF), a protein-rich extract derived from the microalgae 'Chlorella sorokiniana', as an ideal ingredient for a wide range of food and feed applications.



- They are **microscopic algal species**, as opposed to other algae that are macroscopic.
- They are **mostly unicellular**, although some complex associations giving colonies with larger structures exist.
- Depending on the species, their sizes can range from a few micrometers ( $\mu\text{m}$ ) to a few hundreds of micrometers.
- Unlike higher plants, microalgae **do not have roots, stems or leaves**.
- They are **mostly photosynthetic**. Their ability to photosynthesize is due to the presence of photosynthetic pigments.
- They can be found in a variety of **aquatic habitats**, being able to thrive in freshwater, brackish, marine, and hypersaline aquatic environments.

- Examples of unicellular algal species are **green algae, diatoms, and dinoflagellates.**

## Importance:

- They play a pivotal role in ecosystems as **primary producers.**
- Their adaptability and diverse taxonomy make them a crucial component of aquatic food webs, supporting various organisms and influencing nutrient cycling.
- They are a **rich resource of lipids, proteins, carbohydrates,** and pigments with nutritional and health benefits.
  - **Spirulina and Chlorella,** two types of microalgae, are often consumed as dietary supplements.
- Through photosynthesis, they release oxygen as a byproduct, and thus, they are a vital contributor of oxygen in the environment.
- They can form **symbiotic relationships** with other organisms. For example, they live within the tissues of corals (zooxanthellae) and provide them with nutrients through photosynthesis.
- Some of them are also capable of **fixing nitrogen.** Eg: **Nostoc, Anabaena, and Oscillatoria.**

## WHAT IS COLD LAVA?

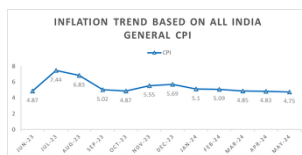


**Mt. Kanlaon Natural Park on Negros Island, Philippines, witnessed rivers of cold lava following an explosive eruption recently.**

- It is called “**lahar**” in Indonesia. It is a phenomenon that occurs **when rain mixes with volcanic materials** like ash, sand, and pebbles.
- The mixture forms a **concrete-like substance** that destroys everything in its path.
- Rain can carry cold lava down the slopes of a volcano during an eruption and into the paths of nearby towns or villages.

- Unlike traditional lava flows, which move slowly and give residents time to evacuate, **cold lava can advance rapidly**, at a speed of hundreds of kilometres per hour, and spread as far away as 60 km from the volcano.
- One of the defining characteristics of cold lava is its ability to pick up additional debris and sediment as it travels downhill.
  - This mixture can **rapidly increase in volume and destructive potential**, transforming from a relatively innocuous flow into a powerful force.
- It is considered **more destructive and deadlier compared to regular lava flows**.
  - Its high density and abrasive nature mean that it can cause significant damage to buildings, bridges, and roads, posing a serious threat to human life and property.
- Cold lava remains hot internally due to chemical reactions within the volcanic material, but its external appearance and behaviour are more akin to wet concrete.
- While it is **commonly associated with volcanic eruptions**, lahars can also occur when no eruption takes place.
  - Sometimes, heavy rainfall or snowfall can easily erode and transport fine-grained, loose volcanic sediment and form a slurry, especially if vegetation has not had time to grow back on recent volcanic deposits.

## WHAT IS THE CONSUMER FOOD PRICE INDEX (CFPI)?



**Consumer Price Index numbers on base 2012=100 for rural, urban and combined for the month of May 2024.**

- The Consumer Food Price Index (CFPI) is a **measure of change in retail prices** of food items consumed by the population.
- It is a specific measure of **inflation** that focuses exclusively on the price changes of food items in a consumer's basket of goods and services.
- The CFPI is a sub-component of the broader Consumer Price Index (CPI) and is used by the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to track inflation**.

- The Central Statistics Office (CSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI) started releasing CFPI for three categories -rural, urban and combined - separately on an all-India basis with effect from **May 2014**.
  - **Methodology:** Like Consumer Price Index (CPI), the CFPI is also calculated on a monthly basis and the methodology remains the same as CPI.
    - The base year presently used is 2012.
    - The CSO has revised the Base Year of the CPI and CFPI from 2010 to 2012 in January 2015.
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## KEY FACTS ABOUT SEA CUCUMBERS



Sea cucumbers, scavengers of the seafloor that resemble cylindrical vegetables, have been consumed as a delicacy in Asia for centuries. But in recent decades, they've been severely overharvested to the point that they are now quite rare.

- Sea cucumbers are **marine animals** that belong to the class Holothuroidea, which is part of the phylum Echinodermata.
- They are **found in saltwater environments** worldwide, primarily on or near the seabed, and are characterized by their soft, leathery skin and elongated bodies.
- Sea cucumbers are the janitors of tropical seas.
  - Just as a **vacuum cleaner** consumes dirt and fills up its bag, sea cucumbers consume **bacteria and decaying organics** from the seafloor and convert this into sea cucumber body mass, reducing the “food” available to support growth of microbial pathogens.

### Appearance and Habitat

- **Size and Colors:** Sea cucumbers come in various sizes, ranging from **75 inches to 10 feet** long, and display a wide array of colors, including brown, red, orange, yellow, white, blue, and patterns.

- **Body Structure:** They have bumps on their bodies and lack eyes and a brain but have evolved clever ways to navigate, defend themselves, and forage for food.
  - **Threat:** Sea cucumbers are preyed upon by various marine animals and are also consumed by humans. Overfishing is a significant threat to their populations, with more than 70 species being exploited for profit.
  - **Symbiotic Relationship:** Some species of sea cucumber have a symbiotic relationship with the **star pearlfish**, which uses the sea cucumber's body as shelter.
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## HEATWAVES HAVE NOT BEEN INCLUDED AS A NOTIFIED DISASTER

### Disaster Management (DM) Act, 2005

- It is a comprehensive legal framework to establish and manage disaster management policies and procedures by defining roles and responsibilities at the national, state, and district levels.

### What are notified disasters?

- Notified disasters are specific types of disasters that have been officially recognized and listed by the government for special consideration and management under the DM Act, 2005.
- These disasters are formally acknowledged to ensure systematic and structured response and relief efforts, often involving the allocation of dedicated funds and resources.
- **Categories of notified disasters under DM Act 2005**
  - The Act includes 12 categories of notified disasters, which are: Cyclone, Drought, Earthquake, Fire, Flood, Tsunami, Hailstorm, Landslide, Avalanche, Cloudburst, Pest attack, Frost and cold waves
  - These are eligible for relief assistance under the SDRF and NDRF.
    - The states first utilise the funds available in the SDRF, and only if the magnitude of the disaster is unmanageable with the SDRF, states seek the money from the NDRF.



## Heatwaves - not included as notified disasters

- **Heatwaves - a common occurrence during summer**
  - Though heatwaves are not a new phenomenon in India, these were not viewed as a disaster when the Act came into being in 2005.
  - It was because heatwaves were a common occurrence during summer, and not really an unusual weather event.

## Why is the Centre not adding heatwaves as a notified disaster now?

- **Reluctance of Finance Commission**
  - The 15th Finance Commission, whose recommendations are currently in effect, stated that the existing list of notified disasters already largely meets the needs of the states and did not support including heatwaves.
- **Practical Difficulties**
  - The main reason behind the reluctance to add heatwaves as a notified disaster is the significant financial implications.
    - The government would have to provide Rs 4 lakh compensation for every life lost due to a notified disaster, along with compensation for grievous injuries.
    - Heatwaves claim many lives annually, and the recorded number of deaths has been increasing, with over 500 heat-related deaths reported this year.
    - Mandating compensation could reveal even more deaths.

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## SATNAMIS AND THEIR HISTORY OF PROTESTS

### Why in News?

A huge mob from the Satnami community torched dozens of vehicles, pelted police personnel with stones and set afire the Superintendent of Police office building in Chhattisgarh's Baloda Bazar district. The protesters were not satisfied with the police's handling of a case (and

demanding a CBI probe) involving the desecration of a 'Jaitkhamb', a structure of sacred importance to the Satnamis.

## Who is the Satnamis Community?

- Satnamis (believes in God whose name is 'truth') are a predominant group within the 11% **Scheduled Caste (SC)** population in **Chhattisgarh** and who are believed to be an offshoot of the **Ravidassia community**.
- The community was founded on **April 21, 1657** by **Bir Bhan** of Narnaul, Haryana. **Udhodas**, a disciple of Saint Ravidas, was the first priest or spiritual guru of the society.
- **The community inhabits the plains** of the state's central region, mostly the old districts of Bilaspur, Durg, Rajnandgaon and Raipur.
- **The sect emphasises on three principles** - adorn the attire of a Satnami devotee, earn money through proper means and **do not tolerate any injustice or oppression in any form**.
- There is a belief that the Satnamis **exert political influence by voting collectively**.
  - The majority of the 10 assembly segments allotted for SCs are occupied by community representatives.
- The community reveres **Mini Mata** - the first female Member of Parliament from Chhattisgarh, who entered the Lok Sabha by winning the 1955 by-election.
  - Invoking her, political parties appeal to Satnamis for votes.

## History of Protest of Satnamis Community - Revolt of 1672:

- The Satnami revolt occurred in the reign of the **Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb** and around what is today's Mahendragarh district of **Haryana**.
- **The revolt began when a Mughal soldier killed a Satnami** and the result was that about 5,000 Satnamis were up in arms.
- They routed the Mughal troops situated in the town, drove away the Mughal administrators and **set up their own administration in its place**.



- The uprising **gained the enthusiasm of Hindus** in Agra and Ajmer also, as they were not happy with Aurungzeb's strict Islamic policies, which included
  - Reviving the Jizya tax (poll tax on non-Muslim subjects),
  - Banning music and art, and
  - Destroying Hindu temples.
- When the Satnamis inflicted several defeats on the Mughal forces, **Aurungzeb himself took personal command and sent troops with artillery to suppress the revolt.**
- What followed was an attempt to kill every remaining member of the Satnamis. The remnants of the Satnamis fled in all directions, who remained totally disorganised and leaderless for a long time.

### Revival of the Satnamis:

- The most important Satnami group was founded in **1820** in the **Chhattisgarh** region of central India by **Saint Ghasidas**, a farm servant and member of the lower (Chamar) caste.
- His Satnam Panth ("Sect of the True Name") succeeded in providing a religious and social identity for large numbers of members of Satnamis.
- Saint Ghasidas preached a code of ethical and dietary self-restraint and social equality and wrote **Nirvan Gyan** to propagate his teachings.
- As a result of connections with the Kabir Panth at different points in history, **Satnamis have complicatedly navigated their position within a larger Hindu hierarchy.**